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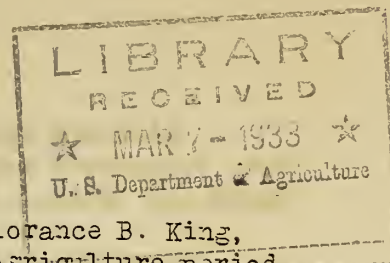
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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

Selecting Kitchen Utensils



An interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman and Dr. Florance B. King, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC stations, Tuesday, February 14, 1933.

MISS VAN DEMAN: How do you do, Everybody:

Dr. Florance King is our guest today. But before we get down to the fine points of selecting kitchen utensils, let me give you this bit of history I came across recently.

Nineteen years ago the Department of Agriculture published a farmers' bulletin by the title of "The farm kitchen as a workshop." The author was Anna Barrows, one of the founders of the home economics movement. That bulletin started people thinking about kitchens in a new way. Miss Barrows was one of the first persons to point out that kitchen tools need to be as good for their purpose and as well arranged as the tools in any workshop.

Dr. King, I take it you are of that same opinion.

DR. KING: Yes, Miss Van Deman, I believe good kitchen utensils pay for themselves in several ways. For example, good measuring utensils prevent waste of food materials. Also, you can work easier and faster in a kitchen if all the utensils are grouped near the centers where you use them.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, Dr. King, I have a copy here of our latest bulletin called "Convenient kitchens". It gives short lists of the utensils needed near the sink, near the stove, near the worktables, and so on. It also cautions us not to fill up our cupboards with a lot of gadgets we don't really need.

DR. KING: That's a wise caution. I know when I go into a store and see a great array of kitchen ware, all bright and shiny and gay in color, I find it hard to keep my mind fixed on utility and wearing quality.

Take saucepans for example. Most saucepans come now in enamelled ware and aluminum. Recently stainless steel has made its appearance in household utensils.

Now, enamelled ware is thin iron coated with layer on layer of enamel baked on until it's hard like glass. The more layers of enamel, the better the grade of utensil. And of course the heavier grades stand up better in use. But all enameled ware needs handling with care to prevent chipping. Also if it is heated up too quickly or cooled too suddenly the enamel may crack. Once the enamel begins to scale off and expose the iron base, discard that utensil at once or the bits of enamel may get into food. The bright colored enameled ware is one of the new developments in kitchen utensils and it certainly adds gaiety to the kitchen. Just be sure in buying that bright color doesn't distract your attention from quality.

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Aluminum also comes in many grades, both light and heavy. And by the way, scientists have made many studies on aluminum ware. Never once have they found any evidence that aluminum utensils are harmful to health.

Aluminum pans are convenient to cook in because they conduct heat evenly, they aren't affected by quick changes in temperature, they never rust, and they are easy to clean. When food stains aluminum you can quickly scour it bright with a bit of steel wool. The very thin stamped or spun aluminum pans are cheap, but they dent easily. The heavy cast aluminum is the most durable but also costs the most.

MISS VAN DEMAN: What about the shape of saucepans, Dr. King? Are some better than others?

DR. KING: Yes, very much. I find a saucepan much more convenient to use if it is well-proportioned. That is, if it has a broad flat bottom that hugs the stove and so conserves heat. I also prefer a saucepan with straight or slightly flaring sides and a rather short handle which I can grasp firmly and comfortably. For cooking very bulky foods such as greens or for making soup, a large saucepan of the berlin shape is convenient. The bulging sides of the berlin type give more space.

MISS VAN DEMAN: I suppose much of what you say about saucepans applies to double-boilers and kettles in general?

DR. KING: Yes. And I'd like to add a word about lids. Every kitchen needs one or two saucepans and kettles with tight-fitting lids to match. Lids are also at times a means of conserving heat and shortening cooking time. Quite the latest thing in lids are those made of tempered glass so that you can watch food as it cooks. And don't forget to choose lids with handles that are easy to pick up.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Dr. King, we've talked so far only about utensils to go on the stove. Have you some ideas about mixing bowls?

DR. KING: Yes, I feel quite strongly on the subject of mixing bowls. I want a mixing bowl of earthenware or glass. I want it heavy enough to stay on the table when I beat a cake batter. I want the sides of the bowl to slope gradually and round into the bottom without a trough. A bowl like that is easy to stir in and you can scrape it clean. Also I like a nest of mixing bowls of several sizes.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Dr. King, at the start you mentioned the value of good measuring utensils to prevent waste of food materials. Is there such a thing as a standard measuring cup?

DR. KING: Yes, there are measuring cups on sale made according to specifications set up by two Government bureaus. There are also sets of cups in which you can measure accurately a fourth, a third, a half, and a whole cup. The idea is the same as in the sets of measuring spoons.

And speaking of small utensils that make work go smoothly in a kitchen, I think that a set of sharp knives and a rack to hold them, a pair of scissors, a good sturdy egg beater with a handle that doesn't cramp the hand, and a

comfortable wooden mixing spoon are just about indispensable.

MISS VAN DEMAN: And there's a lot more we'd like to have you tell us about kitchen equipment. Dr. King, will you come back again?

DR. KING: Yes, I'll be glad to.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Thank you for coming today.

Now, next week Miss Rosemary Loughlin will be with me and talk about cooking winter vegetables to conserve food value.

Goodbye, for this time.

